GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3222
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
LANDSLIDES IN RANIGANJ COAL BELT
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Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether landslides have taken place in the Raniganj coal belt recently endangering the lives of local people as well as damaging rail track and nearby National Highway;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any enquiry into the Incident;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken thereon;

(e) whether incidents of illegal mining are rampant in the area;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and (g) the measures taken by the Government to check the illegal mining in the area?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO)

(a) & (b) On 16.01.07 at about 3.30 AM, there was a subsidence in and around by-pass of National Highway 2 near Ghagarburi temple about 400 meters west side in the road from Asansol diversion point.

(c) & (d) From the study of the abandoned mine plan it revealed that the subsidence might have occurred due to old working of Kusadanga seam of erstwhile North Muslia Coal Company which was closed around 1940. It has been decided by the National Highway Authority to divert the National Highway - 2 towards the north side of the existing Highway where no coal mining had been done. Instructions have been issued to Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries to share the information regarding location of such old workings upon which roads and National Highways have been built with the concerned State & Central authorities for appropriate action.

(e) to (g) Illegal mining takes place both stealthily and clandestinely, inside & outside leasehold areas of Eastern Coalfields Ltd and in some abandoned mines and scattered patches, which are not possible to develop scientifically and economically in organised manner. A Committee under the Chairmanship of Minister of State for Coal has been constituted to look into the issues related to illegal mining of coal. The Committee has held two meetings so far with the representatives of Govt. of Jharkhand, Govt. of West Bengal, Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries.In addition, the following steps are taken by coal companies to prevent illegal mining:

i) Rat holes created by illegal mining are being dozed off and filled up with stone and debris wherever possible,

ii) Concrete walls have been created on the mouth of the abandoned mines to prevent access and illegal activities in these areas,

iii) Fencing is being constructed at the various illegal mining sites along with displaying of signboards mentioning Dangerous and Prohibited Place`.

iv) Dumping of the overburden is being done on the outcrop zones which are not required to e mined.
v) Collection of intelligence reports about illegal coal depots and illegal movement of coal and informing district authorities of the same for taking preventive action.

vi) Installation of check-posts at vulnerable points to check transport documents,

vii) Training of existing security personnel, refresher training of CISF personnel and basic training of new recruits in security discipline for strengthening the security setup,

viii) The coal companies maintain close liaison with the State authorities.